

THE CRC NEWSLETTER

COMMUNITY RELATIONS COUNCILS

Promoting harmony & respect among a diverse citizenry of our State



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Beaufort County Community Relations Council

The Beaufort County Community Relations Council, along with Chairman Dr. Rodell Lawrence are the highlights of this month. On Friday, June 16, 2017, Community Relations Senior Consultant, Sandra Ligon, met with Dr. Lawrence at the infamous Penn Center located on Saint Helena in Beaufort County for a community forum. The island is one of the most beautiful and historically distinct of the South Carolina Sea Islands and at the heart of the Gullah Culture. Penn Center, formerly known as Penn School, is one of the most significant African American historical and cultural institutions in existence today. Penn School was one of the country's first schools for freed slaves and is also a proud parent of the National Park Service.

Dr. Rodell Lawrence is a native of Apopka, Florida and has Gullah roots in the Lowcountry. Lawrence graduated from South Carolina State University located in Orangeburg, South Carolina in 1970. In 1992, he received an Honorary Doctorate of Law from SC State University. Lawrence was also part of the United States Army where he served in the Vietnam War. Working as a research engineer, Lawrence's first job was at North American Rockwell in Columbus, Ohio where he was credited with a United States patent for his work. He later took a position at Xerox Corporation for the next 22 years and awarded with 16 promotions. One of his accomplishments was being recognized as one of the twenty best minds within Xerox Corporation and being part of its Think Tank for three years. He was also responsible for making sure Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) received between \$5-\$6 million dollars annually from the funds provided through the corporation which were given to community agencies including colleges and universities. Among HBCUs which were granted these funds were SC State University, Florida A&M University, Atlanta University Center, Southern University, North Carolina AT&T University, Tuskegee, Howard University, and many others. Lawrence has also worked as a development officer and raised money for Claflin University's \$20 million Capital Campaign, Stillman College, Meharry Medical College, Georgia Southern University and SC State University. He is a member of the Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, Inc. in which he has received numerous awards and recognition for his participation and service.

Dr. Lawrence's vision for Penn Center is clear, steadfast and promising. He states, "The designation of a National Monument is vitally important to Beaufort County, South Carolina and particularly Penn Center. We are ready to share our mission 'to promote and preserve the history and culture of the Sea Islands' with many visitors. Many firsts have taken place at Penn School, Penn Center and within our great Beaufort County. Penn Center stands ready to share this story."



Promoting harmony & respect among a diverse citizenry of our State Community Relations Councils

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Current CRCs:

Columbia, West Columbia, Lee, Allendale, Hampton, Beaufort, Jasper, Berkeley, Myrtle Beach, Georgetown, Lancaster, Rock Hill, Greenwood, Greenville, Anderson, Laurens, McCormick, Aiken

Beaufort County CRC meets every third Thursday of the month at 1:30pm at Technical College of the Lowcountry. The Council follows particular guidelines set forth by members within the Council which are as follows: Diversity, Inclusiveness, Shared Vision, Asset-Based Community Development, Committed to Non-Violence, Collaboration, Committed to Evidence-based or Best Practices, An Efficient and Effective Use of Existing Resources, and Doing "Whatever It Takes". The guideline of "Committed to Non-Violence" is especially significant due to the CRC explaining this guideline best as a quote from The King Center's Pledge of Non-Violence in Honor of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Private meetings were held by Dr. King in the Penn Center decades ago to discuss discrimination which is also of significance to the council and Penn Center.

Dr. Lawrence and the Beaufort County CRC have proposed three topics for summer 2017 and will make their final decision on the topic chosen. Topics selected were: Black Crime, Veteran Outreach, and Economic Divide. The Council also plans to have more engagement from the youth of Beaufort County.

At the May 2017 meeting, members of the Beaufort County CRC paused for a moment of silence in honor of the remembrance of Susan Shaffer, an active Beaufort County CRC member. Ms. Shaffer, a dedicated member, will be dearly missed.

Upcoming Economic Development Conferences



-The South Carolina Association for Community Economic Development will host the Opportunity SC conference on September 13 - 15 in Myrtle Beach, SC. The annual Opportunity SC conference is the largest community development convention and forum in South Carolina. The conference introduces attendees to innovative and sustainable solutions for low-wealth communities in our state. Over the past 17 years, the Opportunity SC conference has welcomed more than 5,000 attendees, representing almost every county in the state. To learn more contact: <https://www.scaced.org/opportunity-sc-2017/>



-The Carolinas-Virginia Minority Supplier Development Council hosts the 2017 CVMSDC Business Opportunity Conference on September 17 - 19 in N. Charleston, SC. CVMSDC promotes and facilitates business relationships between the public/private sector and certified minority-owned businesses. See more at: <http://cvmsdc.org/>

Annual Event Calendar for COMMUNITY RELATIONS COUNCILS

January

MLK/Interfaith Awareness

February

African American History

March

Women's History/End Racism Day

April

Fair Housing

May

Law Enforcement/
Community Relations

June

Disaster Preparedness/Emanuel 9
Remembrance, Peace & Reconciliation

July

Employment Discrimination/
Economic Opportunity

August

Youth Project/Back to School

September

Hispanic Heritage/
Cultural Diversity

October

Disability Employment Awareness

November

American Indian Heritage/
Veterans' Appreciation

December

Aging & Poverty Issues